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Before the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION Washington, D.C. 20554

FCC Mail Room

In the Matter of)	
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal)	
Service		WC DULLET No. 08-7
Grande Communications Networks, Inc.)	CC Docket No. 96-45
Petition for Waiver of	j j	
Sections 54.307 (c) and 54.802 (a) of the)	
Commission's Rules		

To: Wireline Competition Bureau

PETITION FOR WAIVER

Grande Communications Networks, Inc. ("Grande"), pursuant to Section 1.3 of the Rules of the Federal Communication Commission ("Commission" or the "FCC"), hereby respectfully requests waiver of the September 2007 line count filing deadlines set forth in Sections 54.307 (c) and 54.802 (a). Specifically, as an eligible telecommunications carrier ("ETC") in the state of Texas, Grande requests that the Commission direct the Universal Service Administrative Company (the "Administrator") to accept and apply Grande's line-count data submitted for its September 30, 2007 quarterly update in order for Grande to receive the High Cost Loop Support, Local Switching Support, Interstate Access Support, and Interstate Common Line Support for which it qualifies.

Grande did not receive such support for the first quarter of 2008 because the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC" or the "Administrator") does not have record of timely receipt of the updated line counts by the September 30, 2007 deadline. However, as discussed below, Grande timely transmitted the line counts in an e-mail dated September 28,

No. of Copies rec'd_ See 47 C.F.R. § 1.3.

2007, two days before the deadline. The fact that the Administrator's electronic record reflects a receipt date after the deadline is due either to a time-stamping error on the receipt record or other electronic transmission issue over which Grande had no control. Once the line-count data is accepted and applied, the Administrator should pay high cost support to Grande for the first quarter of 2008 based on the line-count data filed for the September 30, 2007 quarterly update.

I. BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Sections 54.307(c) and 54.802(a), Grande was required to meet a September 30, 2007 line-count filing deadline for its High Cost Loop Support ("HCL"), Local Switching Support ("LSS"), Interstate Access Support ("IAS"), and Interstate Common Line Support ("ICLS"). Kristene Stark, Grande's Senior Regulatory Analyst, forwarded this line-count data to the Administrator in an e-mail on September 28, 2007 at 1:51 p.m. CST. Grande's e-mail attached an Excel spreadsheet containing several separate worksheets including the following data: 1) the IAS line-count as of June 30, 2007; 2) the ICLS line-count as of March 31, 2007; and 3) the HCL and LSS line-counts as of March 31, 2007. See Affidavit of Kristene Stark ("Stark Affidavit"), ¶ 3, attached hereto as Exhibit "A."

A true and correct copy of Grande's e-mail accurately reflecting the transmission date and time and including the attached Excel spreadsheet is attached to the Stark Affidavit as Exhibit 1. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 4. Consistent with the recorded date of the e-mail transmission, the "subject" line of Grande's e-mail is "Grande Communications 9/28 filing." Ms. Stark received no notice of a delivery failure or delay after sending the e-mail. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 5. Further, Ms. Stark was not aware then and is not aware now of any issue impacting the successful and timely processing of Grande's outgoing e-mail on the date the e-mail was sent. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 5.

Despite the timely transmission, Ms. Stark received an "EMAIL RECEIPT CONFIRMATION" from HCFilings@telcordia.com dated October 2, 2007, four days after Grande sent its e-mail. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 6. A true and correct copy of the receipt confirmation is attached to the Stark Affidavit as Exhibit 2. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 7. The HC Filing receipt notification includes a copy of Ms. Stark's "original message" but the "sent" time on the Grande e-mail inexplicably shows a date four days after the date the e-mail was sent. Even more confusing, the reflected sent time indicated in Grande's "original message" is 13 minutes after the time HC FILINGS sent the receipt confirmation (9:48 versus 9:35 a.m.). These discrepancies alone suggest the existence of some malfunction or glitch in the time-stamping mechanism used to record and confirm receipt of Grande's September 28th e-mail.

Because the Administrator's records did not confirm receipt of the Grande line-count data until after the September 30, 2007 deadline, Grande did not receive for the first quarter of 2008 high cost support funding for which it qualified. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 8. Grande's accounting department became aware of the problem when it did not receive its high cost support for the first quarter of 2008. Grande then notified the Administrator of this error, but ultimately was told that the Administrator was unable to identify any submission of line-count data from Grande before October 2, 2007. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 9. The Administrator suggested that Grande file for a waiver with the FCC. Id. Thus, Grande is filing the present Petition for Waiver so that Grande may obtain its first quarter of 2008 universal service support funds relating to the September 30, 2007 filing deadline.

II. STANDARD FOR WAIVER

Section 1.3 of the Commission's Rules permit a waiver of a rule requirement for good cause shown. The Commission may exercise its discretion to waive a rule where the particular

facts make strict compliance inconsistent with the public interest.² Additionally, "the Commission may take into account considerations of hardship, equity, or more effective implementation of overall policy on an individual basis." Waiver of the Commission's rules is appropriate if the requested relief would not undermine the policy objective of the rule at issue, good cause or special circumstances warrant a deviation from the general rule, and the deviation will serve the public interest.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Good Cause Exists for a Waiver of the Commission's Deadline to File Quarterly Line Counts

Grande attempted to timely file and believes it did timely file the line-count data for which Grande currently is seeking a waiver (i.e., those due on September 30, 2007). Grande has been denied support for the first quarter of 2008 because of a date discrepancy on Grande's electronic record and the Administrator's electronic record.

The special circumstances supporting a grant of the requested waiver are clear from the substantial and timely efforts Grande made to comply with the requirements and filings necessary to qualify for federal support. This is not an instance in which a deadline was overlooked inadvertently or through lack of attention. Even if an unknown and undetected router or other technical issue somehow caused a delayed delivery of Grande's line count submission, the delay was not substantial. The Administrator's record, even if accurate, confirms receipt of the data no later than two calendar days or one business day beyond the deadline.

² Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990).

³ WAIT Radio, 418 F.2d at 1159; Northeast Cellular Telephone Co., 897 F.2d at 1166.

Because the circumstances presented here were beyond Grande's control and because it took the appropriate steps to complete a timely submission, good cause exists to grant its Petition.

B. Granting this Petition Serves the Public Interest and is Necessary to Avoid Hardship

Granting Grande's Petition would not undermine the underlying purpose of the Commission rules that specify deadlines for submission of updated line counts. Grande fully understands the administrative purpose of the quarterly line count submission deadlines to ensure that such information is filed in a timely manner as well as to enable USAC to process large volumes of data. However, permitting a deviation from strict compliance is appropriate here where Grande prepared and transmitted the data on time. The only issue is whether Grande's submission was timely received at the Administrator's end and the confirmation receipt bears an incorrect time-stamp or whether the transmission was suspended somehow at either end such that its arrival was actually delayed. Either explanation leaves no doubt that Grande did not intentionally delay filing its quarterly line counts. Because the purpose of the rule is to encourage timely submission, that purpose will not be undermined by granting a waiver under these particular circumstances.

Grant of a waiver of Commission rules is necessary, in this instance, to prevent Grande from being adversely affected. Denying Grande universal service support for the first quarter of 2008 does not serve the public interest. Instead, denying a waiver would be contrary to the public interest and inequitable because Grande continued to provide service to qualifying lines during the quarter at issue. Moreover, requiring Grande to forego support for which it qualifies could detrimentally affect its provision of service in the state of Texas. The High Cost Program

of the Universal Services Fund was created to ensure that consumers in all regions of the United States have access to and pay rates for telecommunications services that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. Grande's participation in this program furthers this goal. However, carriers cannot be expected to make the financial investments to provide service in high cost areas without the assurance of federal universal service support.⁴ Thus, waiver is warranted in the current situation.

C. Internal Procedures to Ensure Compliance.

Grande's internal procedures are designed to safeguard against missed filing dates and Grande remains committed to ensuring that it consistently meets its filing deadlines going forward. To that end, Grande has several employees who are specifically responsible for assuring that line-count filings are submitted on time. Grande's system of checks and balances minimizes the potential risk of non-compliance. Moreover, since the institution of an electronic filing system for line-count data, Grande has consistently utilized this system. By submitting its information electronically, Grande is able to quickly and efficiently identify and address any errors. See Stark Affidavit, ¶ 10.

IV. CONCLUSION

Grande respectfully submits to the FCC that its line-count data was timely submitted to the Administrator before the September 30, 2007 deadline. Alternatively, the delay in the Administrator's receipt of Grande's submission was both unintentional and beyond Grande's control. For the reasons set forth above, Grande respectfully requests a waiver of the

⁴ In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96-45, Recommended Decision, 19 FCC Rcd. 4257, ¶ 22 (2004), citing Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Western Wireless Corporation Petition for Preemption of an Order of the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission, Declaratory Ruling, CC Docket No. 96-45, 15 FCC Rcd 15168, ¶ 13 (2000).

Commission's quarterly line-count update deadlines so that Grande may receive its first quarter of 2008 high cost support funds.

Respectfully submitted,

JACKSON WALKER L.L.P.

Kathleen M. LaValle

Kathleen M. LaValle klavalle@jw.com

901 Main St., Suite 6000 Dallas, TX 75202 (214) 953-6144 (214) 661-6664 - Fax

ATTORNEY FOR GRANDE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, INC.

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n the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service)	
Grande Communications Networks, Inc.)	CC Docket No. 96-45
Petition for Waiver of Sections 54.307(c) and 54.802 (a) of the Commission's Rules))	

To: Wireline Competition Bureau

<u>AFFIDAVIT OF KRISTENE STARK</u>

STATE OF TEXAS	§
	§
COUNTY OF TRAVIS	§

BEFORE ME, the undersigned who is validly-licensed as a notary public pursuant to Texas law, appeared KRISTENE STARK, who is personally known to me, who executed this affidavit in my presence, and upon her oath swore and attested to the truth and accuracy of each of the following statements:

- 1. "I am over 21 years of age, have never been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude, have personal knowledge of all of the facts stated in this affidavit, all of which are true and correct, and I am competent to give testimony in this matter.
- 2. "I am Senior Regulatory Analyst for Grande Communications Networks, Inc. ("Grande"). Grande is an eligible telecommunications carrier ("ETC") in the state of Texas.
- 3. "Grande attempted to timely file the line-count data for which Grande currently is seeking a waiver. Grande forwarded the line-count data to the Administrator via e-mail, sent in advance of the September 30, 2007 deadline, on September 28, 2007. The e-mail attached an



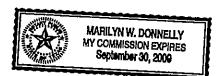
Excel spreadsheet with the following line-count data: 1) the IAS line-count as of June 30, 2007; 2) the ICLS line-count as of March 31, 2007; and 3) the HCL and LSS line-counts as of March 31, 2007.

- 4. "A true and correct copy of Grande's September 28, 2007 e-mail, including the attached Excel spreadsheet, is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.
- 5. "I did not receive notice of a delivery failure or delay after sending the e-mail. I was not aware then and am not aware now of any issue impacting the successful and timely processing of Grande's outgoing e-mail on the date the e-mail was sent.
- 6. "Grande received an "EMAIL RECEIPT CONFIRMATION" from HCFilings@telcordia.com dated October 2, 2007, four days after Grande sent its e-mail.
- 7. "A true and correct copy of the receipt confirmation is attached hereto as Exhibit 2.
- 8. "Grande did not receive high cost support funds based on the submitted linecounts for IAS, ICLS, HCL and LSS that were attached to my September 28, 2007 e-mail.
- 9. "Grande notified the Administrator of this error, but was told that the Administrator was unable to identify any submission of line-count data from Grande before October 2, 2007. The Administrator suggested that Grande file for a waiver with the FCC.
- 10. "Grande's internal procedures are designed to safeguard against missed filing dates. Grande is committed to ensuring that it consistently meets its filing deadlines. To that end, Grande has several employees who are specifically responsible for assuring that line count filings are submitted on time. Grande's system of checks and balances minimizes to the greatest extent possible the risk of non-compliance. Also, since the institution of an electronic filing system for line counts, Grande has consistently utilized this system."

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

KRISTENE STARK

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED TO BEFORE ME UNDER OATH, the undersigned authority, this 11 day of December, 2008.



Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

Kristene Stark

From:

Kristene Stark

Sent:

Friday, September 28, 2007 1:51 PM HC FILINGS (E-mail)

To:

Subject:

Grande Communications 9/28 filing



Sep 07.xls

Please contact

<<Sep 07.xls>> Me if you have any questions.....

Kristene Stark Sr. Regulatory Analyst 512.878.5424

EXHIBIT

COMPETITIVE CARRIERS HIGH COST DATA SUBMISSION

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Check Box if this is a new address/contact f	rom a previous data submission:			_	
(7)Mailing Address	401 Carlson Circle,	San Marrcos, Texas 78666	<u> </u>		
(8) Contact Name (4)	Kristene Stark	(9) Tido: y	Sr. Regulatory Analyst		
(10) Telephone Number	512	.878.5424			
(1) E mail Address:	kristene stark/o	Ocorp, grandecom com	<u></u>		······································

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High Cost Loop Support (HCL)	3/31/2007	x	Complete HCL Worksheet
Local Switching Support (LSS)	3/31/2007	x	Complete LSS Worksheet
Interstate Common Line Support (ICLS)	3/31/2007	x	Complete ICLS Worksheet
High Cost Model Support (HCM)			
Interstate Access Support (IAS)	6/30/2007	x	Complete IAS Worksheet

HIGH COST LOOP (HCL) AND LOCAL SWITCHING SUPPORT (LSS) LINE COUNT WORKSHEET

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HCL & LSS Line Count Worksheet

INTERSTATE COMMON LINE SUPPORT (ICLS) LINE COUNT WORKSHEET

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HIGH COST MODEL (HCM) LINE COUNT WORKSHEET

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7)

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF THE REPORTING CARRIER IS FILING FCC FORM 525 ON ITS OWN BEHALF:

Certification of Officer or Employee as to the Accuracy of the Data Reported in FCC Form 525, Line Count Report for Competitive Carriers, on Behalf of Reporting Carrier									
I certify that I am an officer or employee of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the actual line count data reported on FCC Form 525; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported on this form is accurate.									
Name of Reporting Carrier: Grande Communications Networks, Inc.									
Service Provider Identification Number: 143002452	·								
Signature of authorized officer or employee:	Date: 09/28/07								
Printed name of authorized officer or employee Michael Wilfley									
Title or position of authorized officer or employee. Chief Financial Officer									
Telephone number of authorized officer or employee: (512) 878 - 5424 ext.									
Study Area Code of Reporting CETC 449015 9/28/2007									
persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U. imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or								

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF AN AGENT IS FILING FCC FORM \$25 ON THE CARRIER'S BEHALF:

Certification of Officer or Employee to Authorize an Agent to File Fo Report	CC Form 625, Line Count I ng Carrier	Report for Competiti	ve Carriers, on Bohalf (
I certify that (Name of Apent) 525 on behalf of the reporting carrier, I also certify that I am an efficer or am accuracy of the actual line count data provided to the authorized agent; and, authorized agent is accurate.	ployee of the reporting carrier;	my responsibilities inci	n reported on FCC Form use ensuring the a provided to the
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TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Certification of Agent Authorized to File FCC Form 525, Line Count Report for Competitive Carriers, on Bahalf of Reporting Carrier i, as agent for the reporting carrier, carrify that i am authorized to submit the information reported on FCC Form 525 on behalf of the reporting carrier; I have provided the line count data reported herein based on actual line count data provided by the reporting carrier; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported herein is accurate. I also certify that I will provide copies of the line count filling to the reporting carrier within 15 days.							
Name of Reporting Carrier:	Grande Communication	one Networks Inc		,			
Name of Reporting Camer.	CIBILDS CONTINUCACE	VIII (I WING ING. IIIC			 		
Name of Authorized Agent:			·····				
Signature of authorized agent or employee of	agent				Dato_		
Printed name of authorizad agent or employe	of agent			•			
Tille or posibon of authorized agent or employ	o of scent.	 					
Telephone number of authorized agent(ext					
Study Area Code of Reporting CETC	440015	Filing Due Da	e for this form		* _{1/2} #		
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or ferfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 602, 603(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.							

FCC Form 525 OMB Control No. 3060-0986 January 2005

NOTICE: Sections 54.307(b) and 54.802(a) of the Federal Communications Commission's rules requires all competitive eligible telecommunications carriers to provide line count information to USAC, the universal service Administrator, in order to be eligible to receive support. Pursuant to Sections 54.307(c) and 54.802(a), this information must be submitted by support mechanism on a quarterly basis in accordance with the incumbent carrier's line count reporting schedule. This collection of information stems from the Commission's authority under Section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §254. The data in the form will be used to calculate the amount of support, if any, that each reporting carrier is eligible to receive from the High Cost support mechanisms.

We have estimated that each response to this collection of information will take, on average, 5 hours. Our estimate includes the time to read the instructions, look through existing records, gather and maintain the required data, and actually complete and review the form or response. If you have any comments on this estimate, or how we can improve the collection and reduce the burden it causes you, please write to the Federal Communications Commission, AMD-PERM, Washington, D.C. 20554, Paperwork Reduction Project (3060-0986). We also will accept your comments via the Internet if you send them to Judith-B.Herman@fcc.gov. Please DO NOT SEND COMPLETED DATA COLLECTION FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS.

Remember -- You are not required to respond to a collection of information sponsored by the Federal government, and the government may not conduct or sponsor this collection, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. This collection has been assigned an OMB control number of 3060-0986.

The Commission is authorized under the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, to collect the information we request in this form. We will use the information that you provide to determine High Cost support amounts for competitive eligible telecommunications carriers. If we believe there may be a violation or potential violation of a statute or a Commission regulation, rule, or order, your form may be referred to the Federal, state, or local agency responsible for investigating, prosecuting, enforcing, or implementing the statute, rule, regulation, or order. In certain cases, the information in your form may be disclosed to the Department of Justice, court, or other adjudicative body when (a) the Commission; (b) any employee of the Commission; or (c) the United States government, is a party to a proceeding before the body or has an interest in the proceeding.

If you do not provide the information we request on this form, you are not eligible to receive support under the High Cost support mechanisms, 47.C.F.R. §§ 54.307 and 54.802.

The foregoing Notice is required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, P.L. No. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. § 3501, et seq.

From: HC FILINGS [HCFilings@telcordia.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2007 9:35 AM

To: Kristene Stark

Subject: RE: Grande Communications 9/28 filing

EMAIL RECEIPT CONFIRMATION!

----Original Message----

From: Kristene Stark [mailto:kris,stark@corp,grandecom.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2007 9:48 AM

To: HC FILINGS

Subject: Grande Communications 9/28 filing

Please contact <<Sep 07.xls>> Me if you have any questions.....

Kristene Stark Sr. Regulatory Analyst 512.878.5424